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S E C R E T PARIS 002217

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STATE FOR EUR/WE, EAP, EB/TRA

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TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [MNUC](#) [EWWT](#) [KN](#) [PARM](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: FRANCE: CURTAILING USE OF NORTH KOREAN FLAG OF
CONVENIENCE POINTS DELIVERED

REF: SECSTATE 46192

Classified By: Economic Counselor Kenneth Merten for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (S) Econoff delivered reftel points April 4 to MFA Office Director for Energy, Transportation and Infrastructure Nicole Taillefer, and MFA Office Director for East Asian Affairs Jean-Noel Poirier. Poirier asked how recent a development North Korean marketing of its flag was, and how many ships it concerned. Econoff replied it was relatively recent, and concerned 11 ships within the U.S., but that overall figures were not available. Poirier said that it might be a sign that existing sanctions were having a financial effect, and forcing North Korea to look for new ways to generate cash, including market-oriented ones such as this. Both agreed however that the substantial premium over other registries of convenience raised questions as to the condition or possible activities of such North Korean registered ships.

2. (S) Taillefer asked if the U.S. had taken any action on this issue in the International Maritime Organization. She also wondered whether the U.S. had applied similar measures to North Korean aviation, noting that its airline figured on the recently adopted EU aviation blacklist, based on concerns about safety that were not unlike those we expressed for its ships. She said they would be surprised if any French-owned ships were affected by the U.S. rule, but would need to check to be certain. They agreed to share the information with other offices in the Ministry that could be concerned including those handling financial affairs and non-proliferation.

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Stapleton